

ARGONAUTA



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Editor

Erika Behrisch

Argonauta Editorial Office

e-mail submissions to:

CNRS-Argo@cnrs-scrn.org

Production/Distribution Manager ~ Winston (Kip) Scoville

kscoville@cnrs-scrn.org

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Editorial

by Erika Behrisch



Thomas Huxley was a disgruntled Naval Assistant Surgeon before he was Darwin's Bulldog—he called the Admiralty he served “the last stronghold of dullness” and publicly pilloried them nearly every chance he got. In my opinion, though, he had little to legitimately complain about: having collected specimens and observations during his voyage as Junior Naturalist and Assistant Surgeon aboard the *Rattlesnake* (1846-50), Huxley was given a shore berth upon his return that allowed him time (and employment) to write up his findings. Soon after, he was posted to an active ship and didn't want to go. He was eventually discharged from the Royal Navy for refusing to serve.

Huxley's poor showing came back to me powerfully as I prepared the pieces in this issue, not only for their contents but for the dedication to research, outreach, and maritime history that each represents. Once again, we have an instalment from Derek Waller on the fate of the German U-boats—this time the ones who found their way to Argentina (and, in their flight, fed the rumour mill of prominent Nazi escapes that grinds even to this day). It has been a bittersweet pleasure to work with Derek on each chapter of this little-known part of WW II history, since with each one I know we draw closer to the end. Christopher Wright's revisit of the building history of ss *Nascopie*, too, is an exercise in dedication to careful research: comparing the published history of the early-twentieth-century sealing ship to archival records, Christopher uncovers important details about its construction that challenge the conventional history. The writeups of the Admirals' Medal recipients for the last four years (2018-2021) need no explanation: each winner has expanded and extended our collective knowledge of the maritime world in significant ways.

Huxley's story of recalcitrance resonates for me in my volunteer position as editor of *Argo*, too, and in my abiding admiration for the other volunteers who make up the CNRS Board and who serve in its executive positions, who organize the conferences, and who extend our community's reach into the museums, societies, and universities across the country and around the world.

And for the eclectic, dramatic, surprising, amusing, tragic, and fascinating stories that make up each issue of *Argo*, we rely on you—equally dedicated adventurers on our membership muster list whose contributions keep us reading, thinking, and responding with more tales of our own. We're a ship without sails, floating on a painted ocean, without you.

WMP,
Erika

President's Corner

by Michael Moir

CNRSPresident@cnsr-scrn.org



The holiday season approaches, bringing with it an inclination to reflect on the events of past months before embracing the new year. I recall with fondness our virtual conference in August, when more than forty members on both sides of the Atlantic gathered online to participate in two days of presentations that covered a broad canvas stretching from Canada's Pacific coast to the Indian Ocean, and from the 1730s to the 21st century. Topics included war, coastal defence, port operations, reimagining museum displays, watercolour paintings as historical sources, ship breaking, digital humanities, and rescue operations in the Arctic. The speakers were engaging and their ideas thought provoking, and I hope to read more about their research between the pages of *Argonauta* and *The Northern Mariner/Le marin du nord* in the year to come.

Research and writing on maritime history persevered despite the sickness and upheaval that Covid brought to our lives. The Society must now deal with another lingering effect of the pandemic: inflation. The rising cost of paper and postage, as well as supply chain delays, had a significant impact on production of our journal in 2022. The Editorial Board examined various options to produce *TNM/Lmn* on a more economical and timelier basis, which led to the selection of a new printer and a new page format. The dimensions of the journal will be reduced to six by nine inches, making it consistent with many other Canadian and international scholarly periodicals. Despite an increase in page count per issue to maintain our usual number of articles and book reviews, this new approach will yield significant savings. It also encouraged the editorial team to introduce several design changes, such as replacing the drawing of a Basque ship that has graced the journal's cover (as observed by Walter Lewis, it suffers from stern deficiencies) with an image relating to the issue's contents, a design that was used prior to 2000. There will be a flurry of activity in the coming weeks as the editors strive to publish the remainder of volume 32 by early 2023. We hope that you will appreciate the new format, and I look forward to receiving your comments on these changes once you have these issues in hand.

Despite the savings that will accrue from these changes, it still costs more to run the Society than is received from membership fees and other revenue. This issue was discussed at the annual meeting last August, and it will be explored in much greater detail by Council once the current costs of publishing become clearer. While a digital journal avoids the expenses of printing and mailing, the Society remains committed to producing a paper copy of *TNM/Lmn* because of strong support for this format expressed by members in previous years. The shortfall of revenue, however, was recognized at our recent annual meeting when members voted to increase the rate for Canadian individual members receiving a paper copy of the journal from \$70 to \$80. The cost for other categories remains the same but may be subject to change once the Society has a better understanding of the balance between revenues and expenses to ensure its sustainability.

Best wishes for a healthy and enjoyable holiday season, and for a new year that will hopefully see us gather in St. John's to continue our explorations into Canada's fascinating maritime heritage.

The surrender of *U-530* and *U-977* in Argentina and their time in the US Navy, 1945-1947

by Derek Waller



Introduction

After the end of WW2 in Europe, two U-boats surrendered from sea in Mar del Plata, Argentina. They were *U-530*, which surrendered on 10 July 1945, and *U-977*, which surrendered on 17 August 1945. The Commanding Officers (COs) of the two U-boats had deliberately chosen to head for what they thought was a still-neutral Argentina rather than obeying the Allies' surrender instructions. However, very soon after their long transits to the south Atlantic and arrival in Mar del Plata they, their U-boats, and their crews were handed over to the local US diplomatic authorities.

U-530's voyage to Argentina

U-530, a type IXC U-boat, left Kiel on 19 February 1945 en route for Horten, Norway, on its 5th (and final) operational war patrol. It sailed from Horten on 3 March, via Kristiansand (South), for operations off the eastern coast of the USA, where it was on patrol to the east of New York in early May. But it did not apparently receive the BdU's cease-fire / recall message on 4 May 1945. Its last offensive action took place on 7 May when it fired torpedoes at a large convoy, albeit unsuccessfully. After that, though *U-530's* CO, Lt Otto Wermuth, received the Allied surrender message, he decided that it might not be genuine and opted to head for Argentina rather than surrender in an American port as instructed.

In the meantime, the Allies believed that *U-530* had probably been sunk on 30 April, and the US Navy therefore no longer searched for it during the remainder of May, June, and early July 1945. This assumption, which turned out to be incorrect, was recorded in the Admiralty's "*U-Boat Tracking Paper*" dated 20 May 1945:

The following [13] cases have been reconsidered and, on a generously optimistic view, assessed sunk. (1)

The list of 13 U-boats included *U-530* which, it said, had been sunk at 0210Z on 30 April by the US Navy frigate USS *Natchez* 98 miles east of Cape Henry, Virginia. However, it was subsequently assessed that USS *Natchez* had sunk *U-879* rather than *U-530*.

Thus, in mid-May, when it was in the western Atlantic approximately north-north-east of Puerto Rico, *U-530* began its long—and covert—transit south. It passed the Brazilian island of San Fernando Naronha, and crossed the Equator on 17 June, before arriving off the Argentinian port of Mar del Plata on the evening of 9 July 1945. Just before entering the base, the CO sabotaged the U-boat's diesel engines. As recorded in his interrogation report:

This was done by cutting off the oil circulation, drawing the oil and racing the motors, putting about 1-1/2 liters of [a] mixture of nitric, sulphuric and hydrochloric acids in the oil and circulating that through the motors. He stated that acid had been added to all the oil tanks still containing oil. (2)

At the same time, various components were either removed or damaged, and several electric wires were severed. Also, ammunition, weapons, and other equipment were dumped overboard, together with the log and other secret books, in accordance with the standard procedure followed by most of the U-boats that surrendered.

U-977's voyage to Argentina

U-977, a Type VIIC U-boat, had left Kiel on 13 April and arrived at Horten on 20 April 1945, where it undertook schnorkel trials. On 29 April it left Horten, arriving at Kristiansand (S) in Norway on 30 April before departing on 2 May for operations in British coastal waters in the English Channel.

U-997, too, did not apparently receive the BdU's recall order on 4 May, and was still in the Bergen area when the surrender order was received on 8 May. The CO, Lt Heinz Schaeffer, nevertheless decided to disobey the order and to proceed to Argentina, but not before 16 married members of the crew had been put ashore on the island of Holsenoy north of Bergen on 10 May.

The Allies were unsure of the fate of *U-977* for the remainder of May, but at the end of the month the 16 ex-crew members arrived in Bergen stating that they were the only survivors from *U-977* which, they said, had been wrecked near Bremanger on 9 May while returning from its patrol with a damaged periscope. Their story was accepted by the British authorities and, on 1 June, the Admiralty War Dairy recorded that

Sixteen survivors have arrived at Bergen from U-977, which is considered sunk after stranding on an island when returning from patrol on the night of 9-10 May. (3)

As a result of this incorrect information, both the Royal Navy and the US Navy ceased their searches for *U-977*. In the meantime, the undamaged *U-977* headed for the Iceland Passage and then turned south. On 14 July it anchored near the Cape Verde Islands, and on 22 July passed St Paul Rocks before crossing the Equator on 23 July. Finally, after 107 days at sea, it was sighted on the surface off the port of Mar del Plata on the morning of 17 August by vessels of the Argentinian Navy. It was boarded and surrendered, being the last U-boat to do so, and was then towed into the local Naval Base.

In contrast to *U-530*, the CO of *U-977* did not sabotage his U-boat before surrendering. Rather, his intentions, as recorded in his interrogation by the US Navy, were quite different:

It was absolutely my intention to deliver the boat undamaged into allied hands, while doing the best I could for my crew. I felt that the ship's engines might be a valuable adjunct to the reconstruction of Europe. I carried out these intentions and delivered the boat in perfect condition. (4)

U-530 in Argentina

On 10 July, as soon as it was sufficiently light, *U-530* lit its navigation lights and, following an exchange of visual challenges and messages, it became clear to the Argentine Navy that *U-530* wished to surrender. The U-boat then used its electric motors to enter Mar del Plata, where it was guided into the Naval Base and berthed at the submarine pier. The crew was interned, and this was followed by a major meet-the-press event organized by the Argentine Navy to confirm and publicize the surrender.

On 12 July, *U-530* was officially taken over by the Argentine Navy and the Argentine flag hoisted. During the following days, several visitors went on board *U-530*, among them the US and the UK Naval Attachés.

On 17 July, the Argentine Foreign Office decided to transfer *U-530* to the Allies, since it was obvious to them that either the US or the UK would demand that it be handed over anyway. Thus, on 28 July the Argentine tugboat *Ona*, accompanied by the torpedo boats *Entre Rios* and *Misiones*, towed *U-530* from Mar del Plata to the Naval Base at Rio Santiago in Buenos Aires, arriving there on 29 July.

Almost immediately *U-530* was handed over to a US Navy prize crew that had been flown to Buenos Aires, and arrangements were made for it to be brought to a seaworthy state in the Argentine Navy Dockyard. This involved a great deal of hard work by the US Navy crew under the command of Lt Cdr Glen Jacobsen, who was charged by the Commander Submarines of the US Atlantic Fleet (COMSUBLANT) with submitting a weekly report giving details of progress with *U-530*. The following are extracts of his 4th (22 Aug) and 5th (29 Aug) Reports:

a. 4th Weekly Report (22 August 1945):

1. *On Tuesday 21 August 1945, the U-530 undocked, having completed the scraping and painting of the hull and testing of all tanks.*
2. *Work continues on the main engines, auxiliaries and superstructure. The engine room force is working in two shifts and the base is repairing and machining the bearings as rapidly as facilities permit. The base worked only two days last week, due to national holidays, and this delayed progress in all departments.*
3. *It is now felt that the condition of the main engines was caused by deliberate sabotage on the part of the Germans, by running the engines without lube oil. Numerous evidences of missing and broken equipment, such as the removal of the magnetic compass, damage inflicted on the TCG, on the radar receiver, and the cutting of electrical wires in the junction boxes, indicate that a program of destruction was carried out.*
4. *By all indications, the U-530 will be ready for sea 8 September 1945. (5)*

b. 5th Weekly Report (29 August 1945):

1. *All departments of the U-530 can now be considered 80% ready for sea. Work on the engines is on a three section twenty-four hour a day basis and it is hoped that both engines will be ready to fire by the end of this week. Stores and fuel have been ordered and will be on board by September 4. Also, a duplicate order has been placed for the U-977.*
2. *River trials are scheduled early next week, and departure will be made on 8 September as scheduled. (5)*

U-977 in Argentina

When *U-977* surrendered on 17 August 1945, over a month later than *U-530*, the US Navy in Washington was immediately notified by the Naval Attaché in Buenos Aires, and on 18 August the Commander-in-Chief US Navy (Cominch) advised the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet (CinCLant) that it was anticipated that *U-977* would be handed over to the United States and that a crew was to be made ready to leave for Argentina at short notice.

Under its own power, *U-977* was moved from Mar del Plata to the Rio Santiago Naval Base in late August, and it was formally handed over to the US Navy on 6 September, although

US Navy personnel had been on board prior to this. There was, however, and despite plans to the contrary, no time for the U-boat either to be docked or even painted prior to its departure for the USA on 11 September in company with *U-530*.

Rumours and Conspiracy Theories

U-530's lengthy voyage to Argentina led to a plethora of rumours and conspiracy theories that it (and *U-977*) had transported escaping Nazi leaders and / or Nazi gold to South America, and even that it had sunk the Brazilian cruiser *Bahia* on its journey south—all of which were untrue.

Amongst the many rumours, which some people still believe today, the Brazilian Navy's Admiral Jorge Dodsworth Martins said he believed that *U-530* could have sunk the *Bahia*, while Admiral Dudal Teixeira, also of the Brazilian Navy, said he believed that *U-530* had come from Japan. Also, an Argentine reporter claimed that he had seen a Buenos Aires provincial police report to the effect that a strange submarine had surfaced off the southern Argentine coast in Patagonia and had landed a high-ranking officer and a civilian who might have been Hitler and his wife Eva Braun in disguise.

However, after an inquiry, the Argentine Navy issued an official communique intended to put these rumours to rest:

The German U-boat was not responsible for the sinking of the Bahia.

No Nazi leader or military officer was aboard.

U-530 had landed no one on the Argentine coast before surrendering. (6)

The prime source of these various incorrect rumours seems to have been a report written by the US Naval Attaché in Buenos Aires on 13 July after *U-530*'s crew were interrogated by officers of the Argentine Navy. The report contained three highly speculative and unsupported allegations. The first was that, because there were 54 personnel on board *U-530*, there was a suspicion that some of the men may have belonged to another U-boat. This was despite the fact that a Type IXC U-boat normally carried a crew of up to 60 personnel. The second was the suggestion that, because of the size of the crew, the CO (Lt Wermuth) may not have been the real CO, and that the latter may have been landed elsewhere. Third was a further suggestion that, because of the poor condition of the U-boat, there appeared to be no reason why *U-530* could not have returned to a European port from the east coast of the USA before arriving in Argentina with passengers on board.

Further fuel was added to the rumour fire by an FBI report on 4 August that alleged three things: first, that on 28 June, a submarine had surfaced off Santa Cruz, near San Julian in Patagonia, and landed a high-ranking army officer and an important civilian, possibly a woman; second, that on or about 27 June, two people were landed near Stroeder (700 miles north of Santa Cruz) in a rubber boat—and that one was in uniform and the other was possibly a woman; and third, that a German source had informed the FBI that Hitler had flown north from Germany on 9 July (presumably to Norway), that he had then been flown south to Africa, and had been brought to Argentina by *U-530*—all this apparently happening within the immediate 24-hour period before the U-boat surrendered on 10 July.

In contrast, during his interrogation, Lt Wermuth confirmed some important facts:

Fifty-Four men was the normal compliment of a U-boat of the type of U-530.

The crew aboard U-530 was the original crew that had left Germany on 19 February.

At no time during the voyage had U-530 had aboard any passengers of any nationality, civilian or military.

No persons or treasure had been landed in Argentina or elsewhere prior to the surrender, and at no time had any treasure been aboard U-530. (2)

It seems to have been forgotten that when *U-530* left Germany in February on its 5th operational war patrol, the war in Europe was still underway, and that the likelihood of the U-boat being involved in any escape attempt by Nazi leaders at that stage of the war was virtually nil. On the other hand, in the confusing conditions of May and June 1945, it is perhaps no wonder that various speculative reports about escaping Nazis became the basis of numerous conspiracy theories.

None of these rumours had a trace of truth, but they have nevertheless subsequently become the basis for many books on the topic; when stretched—and no matter how farfetched—the rumours have made good commercially beneficial stories for a variety of authors. Indeed, thriller writers still have an eager audience in those who wish to believe that Hitler and his wife Eva Braun escaped by submarine to a new life in South America at the end of the war in Europe, along with several of his high-profile Nazi cronies including Martin Bormann—who died in Berlin in May 1945.

The transfer of U-530 and U-977 to the USA

At the same time as Lt Cdr Jacobsen and his US Navy prize crew had been flown to Buenos Aires to take charge of *U-530*, the US Navy's fleet tug *USS Cherokee* (ATF-66) had been ordered to transfer from the Caribbean to Buenos Aires to escort *U-530* to the USA. After it surrendered on 17 August *U-977* was added to the tug's task, and the three vessels were designated as composing the US Navy Task Group CTG 21.4, which was charged with the move of the two U-boats from Argentina to the USA.

As recorded in *USS Cherokee's* Deck Log, the two U-boats, with their US Navy crews, left the Rio Santiago Naval Base in Buenos Aires on 11 September, with *U-530* initially under tow by *USS Cherokee* and with *U-977* under power, viz:

Moored to pier at Rio de la Plata Naval Academy, Santiago Island, Buenos Aires, Argentina. U-530 moored along starboard side. U-977 moored outboard U-530. Made preparations for getting underway. U-977 underway from alongside. U-530 underway from alongside. Underway in accordance with ComSubLant dispatch P-16, serial 1115, dated 13 August 1945. Reversed course proceeding to U-530 to take her in tow. Proceeding astern of U-530 awaiting her repair. Took departure for Rio de Janeiro in company with submarines U-977 and U-530. (7)

It had originally been planned that *U-530* and *U-977* would leave Buenos Aires on 8 September with their escort *USS Cherokee*. However, their departure was delayed until 11 September, and even then there were mechanical problems on the very first day with *U-530*, and it needed to be towed for a short time while repairs were undertaken. The first port of call was Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, where they arrived on 16 September, but not before the Task Group had become separated in fog shortly before their arrival. As described in *USS Cherokee's* Deck Log:

Commenced using fog signals. Stopped with no way on. Underway using various courses and speeds to locate U-530. Made contact with U-530. Reversed course

proceeding to locate U-977. With U-530 keeping astern station. Made contact with U-977. Secured fog signals. Proceeding to Rio de Janeiro. (7)

There was a considerable amount of US Navy message traffic concerning CTG 21.4's visit to Rio de Janeiro, particularly in relation to the security implications. For instance, on 11 September, the US Naval Officer Brazil (NOB) sent a message to the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANT):

Movement of subject subs [U-530 and U-977] becoming generally known evidently through leaks in Argentine Navy. President Vargas through indirect and unofficial channels has had it brought to my attention that he would appreciate an invitation to inspect subs when in Rio. Same holds for Minister of Marine and other ranking Brazilian officials.

In view of foregoing suggest movement of subs be unclassified from now on and that local press be allowed to cover arrival and departure of subs in Rio. If permission granted it is intended that subs be anchored within Brazilian Navy sub base where proper supervision can be maintained. (8)

The topic was then subject to urgent consideration in Washington, and an internal memo from the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Ops), also dated 11 September, provided the answer:

Naval Officer Brazil states President of Brazil and other officials would like to inspect German subs when they stop at Rio en-route Trinidad from Buenos Aires. Apparently intended movements of S/Ms have become known through leaks.

Suggestion is made by NOB Rio that movement of S/Ms be declassified and Rio press be allowed to cover local arrival and departure. CINCLANT recommends approval. State has no objection. Attached dispatch approves NOB Rio [proposal]. (8)

The visit to Brazil went ahead with no problems, with the two U-boats and their escort being accommodated in Rio's Ilha das Cobras Brazilian Navy Base from 16 to 20 September 1945. However, the suggestion that they might be inspected by the Brazilian President was not followed up. Nevertheless, the visit was given full publicity and, as recorded in the Rio de Janeiro newspaper *Jornal do Brazil* on 20 September, members of both the Brazilian Navy and the local press were welcomed on board.

After the visit to Rio, the Task Group sailed north again, heading first for Natal in northern Brazil and then for Trinidad in the British West Indies. The purpose of these proposed stops was to allow the two U-boats to be inspected by the Allied Tripartite Naval Commission (TNC). The August 1945 Potsdam Agreement, which included the requirement to allocate 10 of the Kriegsmarine's surrendered U-boats to each of the three Allies (USA, UK, and USSR), had led to the creation of the TNC in Berlin, which was charged with determining exactly which U-boats would be allocated to each ally.

To this end, members of the TNC Board for the Western Hemisphere visited the USA, Canada, and the Caribbean in August, September, and October 1945 to inspect the U-boats that had surrendered in the western Atlantic and to determine their condition.

The Board first met in Washington, DC, on 29 August and, between then and mid-September, inspected the 10 U-boats located in the USA and Canada. However, as recorded in its Report dated 25 September, the Board was unable to report on the condition of U-530 and U-977 as they were still in transit from Argentina. It was expected that reports

on their condition would not be available to the TNC until they arrived in the USA in late October, and that this would hold up the Commission's work.

In view of this delay, the US Navy was keen to facilitate the TNC Board's inspection of *U-530* and *U-977*, and the initial plan was that this should take place at Natal in Brazil, as was indicated in a message from the Commander-in-Chief US Navy (COMINCH) to CINCLANT on 20 September:

Urgent that Tripartite Naval Board inspect U-530 and U-977 earliest. Arrange visit by CTG 21.4 to Natal [Brazil] where Board will make inspection. Upon completion route TG [Task Group] at your discretion to final destination New London. Direct NOB Rio to make appropriate arrangements with Brazilian Government via American Embassy. (5)

There were second thoughts in Washington about this proposal after the US Ambassador in Brazil suggested that there could be difficulties in obtaining permission for the British and Russian members of the TNC Board to visit Natal, and this led to a follow-up message from COMINCH to CINCLANT on 22 September:

Cancel my 202201. Direct Cherokee with U-977 and U-530 proceed Trinidad for inspection by Tripartite Naval Board. Upon completion inspection and when ready sail this Task Group routed at your discretion to New London to await further orders. (5)

To implement this new proposal, the US Navy arranged for the TNC Board members to meet in Trinidad in the British West Indies in early October, with an internal US Navy memo dated 28 September noting the schedule:

The Tripartite Sub-Board is scheduled to meet in Trinidad to inspect the U-530 and U-977 on their arrival that post about 3 October 1945. All members of the Sub-Board now present Trinidad. (8)

CTG 21.4 therefore sailed direct from Rio de Janeiro to Trinidad, where it arrived at the US Naval base in Chaguruamas Bay on 2 October; *U-530* and *U-977* were inspected by the TNC Board for the Western Hemisphere on 3 October. The Task Group's journey from Rio to Trinidad was affected by engine problems on both the U-boats, necessitating underway repairs, including engineering support from USS *Cherokee*.

After submission of the Board's inspection report dated 4 October, the TNC itself agreed upon the initial allocation of U-boats to the Allies at its 13th Meeting on 10 October 1945. However, the list of U-boats allocated to the USA included neither *U-530* nor *U-977*, the implication being that they were not in a good state of repair and that they would therefore have to be sunk as surplus to requirements no later than 15 February 1946.

It was nevertheless accepted by the TNC that there should be flexibility in the allocations, and that bi-lateral exchanges of individual U-boats could be made as desired. As a result, following a message from the senior US TNC Representative to his UK and Soviet Naval colleagues on 3 November 1945, the TNC allocation to the USA was changed:

The United States desires to substitute [5] ex-German U-Boats [including U-530 and U-977] now located in the Western Hemisphere for those [5] now allocated to the United States [and] now located in the United Kingdom, unless the Soviet Union or the United Kingdom have objection. (8)

This proposal was agreed by the UK and Soviet members of the TNC and, as a result, the

final allocation of 10 U-boats to the USA for technical assessment and experimental purposes included *U-530* and *U-977*.

After leaving Trinidad on 5 October, the remainder of the journey north was uneventful, and the Task Group arrived at the US Navy Submarine Base in New London, CT, on 12 October 1945.

Victory Loan Bond tours

On 18 October, despite neither *U-530* nor *U-977* being in good condition—especially after their long transit from Buenos Aires—the US Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) authorized their preparation for two Victory Loan Bond tours of the American east coast and Caribbean ports. These were originally planned to take place between 29 October and 8 December, but the initial readiness date for the two U-boats slipped to 5 November, and even that only became possible after permission had been given to use spares from two of the other U-boats which had surrendered in the USA, *U-805* and *U-1228*, viz:

a. 18 Oct from CNO:

Prepare U-977 and U-530 [for] duty exhibition purposes [in] connection [with] Victory Loan drive 29 October thru' 8 December. Advise earliest RFS [ready for sailing] date. (9)

b. 29 Oct from COMSUBLANT:

RFS dates [for] U-530 [and] U-977 remain 5 November. (9)

c. 2 Nov from CNO:

Authority granted to permit U-530 and U-977 to cannibalise spares from U-805 and U-1228 that are necessary for carrying out scheduled operation. (9)

When ready, *U-977* took part in a five-week tour of seven US East Coast ports in company with the destroyer USS *Baker* (DE-190), starting from New London on 5 November and arriving back in New London on 13 December 1945. They visited Albany (6 to 12 Nov), Poughkeepsie (12 to 15 Nov) and Newburgh (15 to 17 Nov) in New York State, Wilmington (18 to 22 Nov) and Lewes (22 to 25 Nov) in Delaware, Richmond (26 Nov to 2 Dec) in Virginia, and Washington, DC (3 to 10 Dec). This gave the American public in those places an opportunity to see both a German U-boat and a US Navy destroyer escort, the objective being to stimulate interest in the Victory Loan fund-raising drive.

Similarly, *U-530* took part in a seven-week tour to seven US ports in Texas. It travelled on the surface throughout and was escorted by the destroyer USS *Thomas* (DE-102). The U-boat and its escorting destroyer left New London on 5 November and, after calling at the Key West Naval Base on 9/10 November, they visited Port Arthur (11 to 16 Nov), Houston (16 to 22 Nov), Galveston (22 to 25 Nov), Corpus Christi (26 to 29 Nov), Brownsville (30 Nov to 2 Dec), Beaumont (3 to 8 Dec) and Orange (8 to 12 Dec). On the return journey north, *U-530* had overnight stops at both the Key West Naval Base (15/16 Dec) and the Norfolk Naval Base (19/20 Dec) before it arrived back in New London on 22 December 1945.

US Navy policy for U-530 and U-977

After the Victory Loan Bond tours, the US Navy decided that it had no further requirement for either *U-530* or *U-977*. As a result, the following instructions were issued:

a. 9 Jan 46 from CNO:

Sail ... U-530 and U-977 to Naval Base Boston for care and preservation, place out of service and retain for explosive tests. (10)

b. 9 Jan 46 from COMSUBLANT [to U-530 and U-977]:

Proceed from New London to Naval Base Boston - 14 Jan. (10)

U-977 reported its arrival at the Boston Naval Base on 16 January, and *U-530* arrived on 18 January. Meanwhile, the general US Navy policy in relation to these two U-boats had been set out in a memo from the US Navy's Bureau of Ships (BuShips) to PNY on 8 January 1946:

The U-530 and U-977 that were formerly on War Bond Tours have completed that duty and are now [sic] berthed at the Boston Shipyard.

No further operations are expected from these submarines other than as possible targets for explosives tests.

Permission is granted to take such material and equipment as is needed for spare parts for the operating U-boats from these submarines.

Removal of material should not be such that the submarines could not be towed to a target area and submerged in a static dive. (10)

This was not the end of the story. On 28 May 1946, the CNO issued the US Navy's definitive policy concerning the U-boats which, after listing the five that were to be retained, stated that

All other German submarines will be disposed of upon completion of exploitation of equipment, and cannibalisation of equipment and spares. The Chief of BuShips is to advise this office when U-234, U-505, U-530, U-889, U-977 and U-1105 are ready for disposal. (11)

As a result, BuShips advised the CNO on 1 August 1946 that *U-977* was ready for disposal, and a similar statement about *U-530* was made by BuShips on 6 August 1947.

The final fates of U-530 and U-977

The first of the two U-boats that had surrendered in Argentina to be disposed of by the US Navy was *U-977*, in November 1946. The U-boat had been berthed in an out-of-service condition at the Boston Naval Base since January 1946, where it was stripped of equipment and spares for the US Navy's other in-use U-boats.

After *U-977* was finally and formally authorized for disposal on 6 November 1946, the US submarine US S/M *Atule* embarked observers (including members of the Press) at the US Navy's Submarine Base, New London on 12 November before getting underway:

On a special assignment concerning the destruction of the U-977 by torpedo fire. (12)

Thus, on 13 November 1946, after a transit via the Cape Cod Canal, US S/M *Atule* effected a rendezvous with the yard tug *ATR 64* and *U-977* (under tow) in position 42.33N, 69.43W off Cape Cod and, as recorded in US S/M *Atule*'s Deck Log:

12 Nov. Underway on a special assignment concerning the destruction of the U-977 by torpedo fire. (12)

13 Nov. At 1119 fired torpedo Mk 23 from Tube No 1 which destroyed the U-977. (12)

Next it was the turn of *U-530*, which had been moved back to Portsmouth on 2 May 1946, and which had also been stripped of equipment and spares for use in other U-boats, an exercise completed by mid-1947. It was formally declared as ready for disposal on 27 September 1947 and then, together with three other surplus U-boats, it was sunk as a target in experimental torpedo tests off Cape Cod on 21 November 1947.

The four U-boats had first been towed from Boston and Portsmouth to Provincetown Harbour on Cape Cod, and *U-530* was then towed from Provincetown to the firing area on 20 November by the submarine rescue ship USS *Tringa*. The weather was not good, and shortly before midnight the tow was lost. The operation was therefore completed on the following day by the submarine US S/M *Toro*, the Deck Log of which records that at 1148 on 21 November 1947:

A torpedo was fired from Tube 6 which exploded beneath [the] conning tower of U-530 in position 42.39N, 69.32W. (13)

Conclusion

After their long but ultimately unsuccessful voyages of "escape" to the South Atlantic, the two U-boats that surrendered in Argentina, *U-530* and *U-977*, had a short but relatively eventful life in the US Navy. First, they were handed over to the Americans very soon after their arrival in Mar del Plata. Then they were sailed to the USA, leaving Buenos Aires on 11 September 1945, and arriving at the US Navy Submarine base in New London, CT, on 12 October, after stops at Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and Trinidad in the British West Indies.

Thereafter, they each took part in separate Victory Bond tours in November and December 1945 before being moored at the Boston Navy Yard in January 1946, where they were used as sources of spares for the other in-use U-boats in the US Navy. Thus, they quickly became of no further use, and their final disposal off Cape Cod was implemented by torpedoes fired from US Navy submarines on 13 November 1946 (*U-977*) and 21 November 1947 (*U-530*).

Other than their US War Bond Tours, the main claim to fame of these two U-boats was that they were—and to some extent they still are—at the centre of many conspiracy theories relating to the rumoured escape from Europe to South America of Adolf Hitler and his wife Eva Braun in May 1945 after the fall of Berlin to the Russians. However, none of the theories have any substance whatsoever as, in each case, the surrender of *U-530* and *U-977* occurred at the end of a routine operational patrol—albeit that their COs deliberately ignored the Allied instructions issued on 8 May 1945 to surrender in a port in either the western or eastern Atlantic.

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13. NARA Washington, RG 24: Deck Log of US S/M *Toro*, November 1947.



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ss *Nascopie*: The Early Years

by Christopher Wright

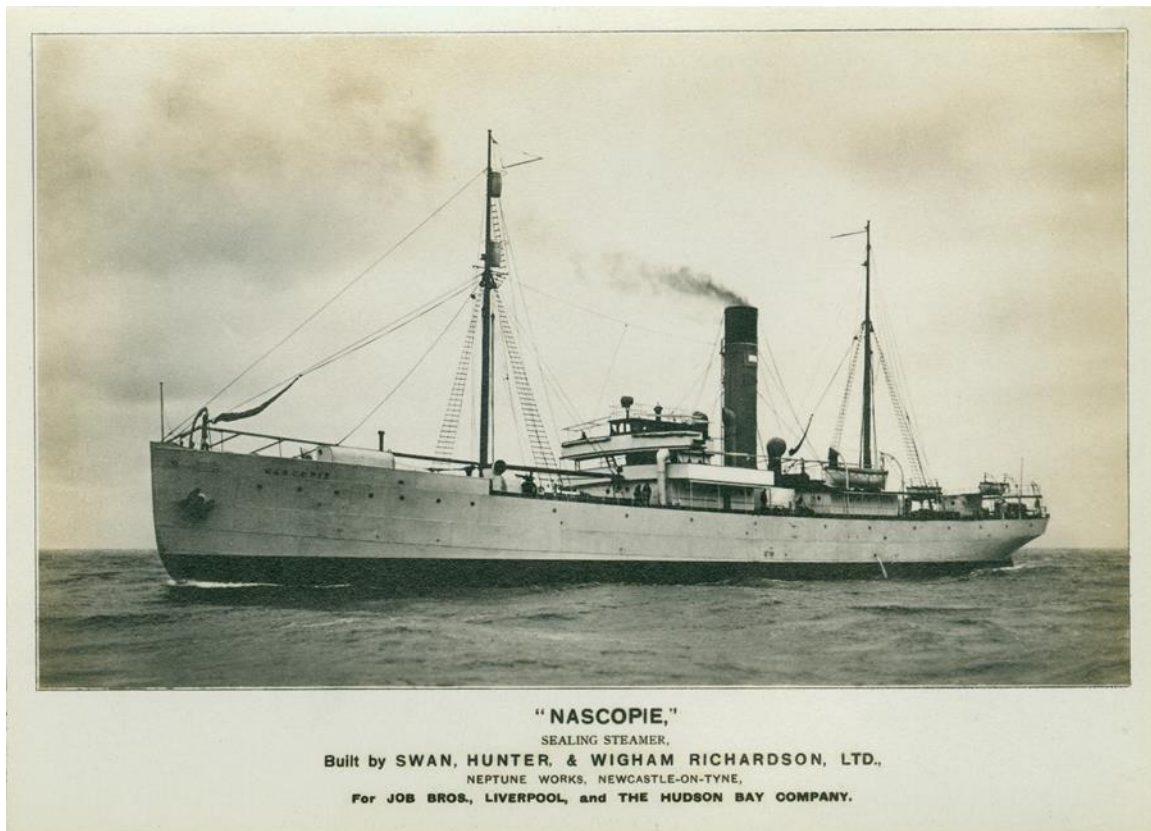
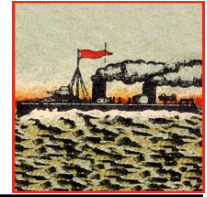


Fig. 1: Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson delivery photograph of *Nascopie*. Note the description as a sealing steamer

From its first voyage in 1912 to its sinking off Cape Dorset in the summer of 1947, the *Nascopie* played a vital role in the re-supply of the Canadian Eastern Arctic for close to 35 years, but very little has been written about the ship, and not one of the sources referenced correctly attributes the genesis of the boat to Job Brothers¹ (Job) of St. John's and Liverpool. Either directly or indirectly, all claim that it was built by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and that Job (if mentioned at all) were only retained to manage the vessel.

Construction of the ship

The first piece of the puzzle regarding construction of the *Nascopie* was a letter dated 21 March 1911 from the Liverpool branch of Job to "The Manager Hudson Bay Company London," in which Job noted the success of steel boats in the seal fishery and observed that they are supplanting the wooden ones. The letter stated that the Job Brothers' *Beothic* and other steel boats had been so successful, they were contemplating building another of larger dimensions², and "*it has occurred to us that possibly it might suit your company to take a half interest in her with us, as apart from sealing she would be suitable for your Hudson Bay work, and when the Port Nelson Railway opens she should be especially adapted for this business.*"

Job also pointed out that the *Beothic* had paid a 25% dividend for each of the past two years, and that they expected at least as good a result from the 1911 season. On these results, they expected no difficulty in getting shares taken.

The final paragraph of the letter makes it unequivocally clear who was driving the partnership: “*If this matter is worth the consideration of your board, one of our partners will be happy to call and discuss matters personally at any appointed time, but the sooner the better.*”

Background of the new steel sealers

A.J. Harvey took delivery of the first ice-strengthened steel sealer in 1906: the Adventure. The Adventure brought in valuable seal cargoes over the next few years, in addition to being taken on summer charters from 1907 by Revillon Frères, who were busy building a competitive presence to the HBC in the Eastern Canadian Arctic fur business³. The HBC would have been aware of the capabilities of the ship because Edmund Mack, who was captain of the HBC’s re-supply ship Pelican, noted in a Beaver article in 1938 that the Adventure frequently passed his ship en route to Hudson Bay for Revillon.

Job’s Beothic was delivered in 1909 and had its initial sealing season that year. It was joined by Harvey’s Bellaventure and Bonaventure as well as Bowring’s big passenger/cargo steamer Florizel. The tables below provides a comparison of the steel sealers:

Characteristics of steel Sealers⁴

Name	Net. Reg	Del.	Sealing Crew ⁵	Dimensions LxBxDxd, ft	Power nhp
Adventure	1,504	1906	270	265x38x?x22	n/a
Bellaventure	997	1908	270	241x36x?x17	350
Bonaventure	980	1909	270	239x36x?x17	325
Beothic	1,028	1909	203	241x35x?x17	328
Florizel	1,980	1909	270	306x43x30x?	437
Nascopie	1,521	1912	272	285x43.75x?x22.5	339
Stephano	2,144	1911	270	326x46.3x?x19.9	577

Relative performance of Job Bros. sealers in dollars⁶

Sealer/Year	1909	1910
All 3 wooden walls: <i>Diana, Neptune, and Erik</i>	\$34,218	\$50,304
<i>Beothic</i>	\$53,660	\$62,314

To get a sense of equivalent values today, multiply the sealing revenue by 25: in today’s terms, Job earned nearly \$3 million, of which more than half came from their new steel sealer. Other steel ships also did well, with *Florizel* bringing in \$90,800 value in 1910. Harvey’s three steel sealers brought in over \$120,000 value in catch in each of the two years—one can easily understand Job’s enthusiasm for the new type of ship.

Agreement to build the *Nascopie*

The HBC, replying to Job’s letter of 21 March 1911, sent Job (Liverpool) a telegram on 29 March, presumably suggesting a meeting, as Job replied the same day by mail that their Newfoundland partner was away that day, but they would wire on 30 March to determine a day that “*we may have the pleasure of calling upon you.*” William G. Job then sent a handwritten letter dated 30 March to the Secretary, Hudson Bay Company, from the Waldorf Hotel in London, to say that he would reply to telephone messages and telegrams on Monday, be back in London on Tuesday morning, and remain available for an interview any day during the balance of the week.

Although the actual date of the meeting isn't recorded in the correspondence file, a letter from Job (Liverpool) on 3 April confirms that it took place, and that an important party to the meeting was a Mr. Cunliffe.⁷ Job replied at length to a telegram sent to the Waldorf Hotel by the HBC, seeking particulars of a proposed agreement.

In the meantime, there had been a flurry of telegrams and letters between the HBC, Captain John Ford, and Captain Cleveland Smith regarding a suitable length and draft for the proposed new vessel, with particular reference to Charlton Island.⁸ Job's letter alludes to the development of the proposed ship's dimensions by stating that the HBC did not want a ship over 280' in length, but 18' draft would limit capacity to about 1,880 tons, which they felt was "*inexpedient*." Their suggestion was 280' length on a beam of 41', but 22' draft, which would give 2,500-2,700 tons capacity. Such a boat could be built for the same price as the smaller one—viz £38,000, perhaps a little less. They also pointed out that such a ship would be at 19-20' draft on arrival at "*your Bay*," and suggested a very moderate coal consumption of 10 tons per day at 9-10 kts:

"If after considering these details you would like to have another interview, our Newfoundland partner Mr. William G. Job will be happy to call and discuss the matter further."

Job also enclosed two years of audited statements regarding the *Beothic* and referred the HBC to the Bank of Liverpool and the Bank of Montreal, London for financial references. We do not know to whom an HBC cable to St. John's NL on 4 April was sent, but one was, asking about Job's suitability as a business partner. They received an affirmative answer the same day.

On 7 April, Job (Liverpool) sent the HBC two cables and an extensive letter, which more or less determined the characteristics of the new ship. It was to be 285' LOA, 43' beam, and 2,500 tons capacity on 21' draft. A table was provided showing that dwt capacity was reduced by 100 tons for each 4" of draft reduction. At 18' draft, capacity would be 1,740 tons. Job pointed out that the ship had an excellent cubic capacity⁹ relative to the *Beothic*: 155,000ft³ vs 92,000ft³.

Apparently, Job had been able to arrange a three-month charter of the *Beothic* with the HBC for 1911 at £1,200/month, and proposed the same charter rate for the new vessel, although only for two months. Job pointed out to the HBC that this was highly favourable given its cubic capacity, and that they would have to carry insurance for £40,000 vs £30,000 for the *Beothic*.

Leonard Cunliffe appeared to be in favour of coming to an agreement with Job. On the following day (Saturday, 8 April), he sent a handwritten letter to Thomas Skinner (appointed HBC Deputy Governor in 1910) recommending the agreement with Job. He noted, "*My impression is that we can come to quite a fair arrangement with Messrs. Job, both as to the annual charter at a price very favourable to the HBC, and also with regard to the management commission based on net profits.*" He suggested coming to a final decision by Tuesday, 11 April.

There is a gap in the correspondence at this point, but Job must have received an affirmative response; their Liverpool office sent the ship's hull specifications to the HBC on 18 April, and noted in the cover letter that the engine specifications would be sent the following day. These documents were copies of those sent to selected ship builders. Three days later they advised on progress with negotiations over the *Nascopie*. This is the first time the name was mentioned, but there is no indication as to who chose it, or when.

Shipbuilders contacted regarding the proposed new ship

Napier Miller & Co.	£45,800	Clyde, with Rankin & Blackmore engines
	£46,700	with Dunsmuir engines
Palmer Shipbuilding Co	£47,250	East Coast
Antwerp Engineering	£43,850	Antwerp
Swan Hunter & Co	£44,000	East Coast
D & W Henderson	£45,000	Clyde
Railton Dixon & Co		Unable to guarantee delivery in time
Sir W.G. Armstrong & Co		Unable to guarantee delivery in time

Job was concerned that the bids had come in considerably over their estimates, but after discussion with the builders found that the specification was much more expensive than necessary, and far in excess of the *Beothic*. They enclosed changes to the specifications in their responses to the shipbuilders, which they expected to bring prices down to £42,000, but did not feel they could get it reduced much further. Job sought authority from HBC to negotiate at £42,000, as they intended to narrow the field down to two builders by Monday or Tuesday. Job stressed the need for a prompt decision to ensure that the boat was ready for the 1912 sealing season.

A short letter from Job (Liverpool) on 26 April noted that there was keen competition for the contract, and on 27 April, Job sent the HBC a telegram advising that they had contracted for the ship at Swan Hunter at £38,600, which they considered an excellent price.

The contract with Swan Hunter was signed by Job on 28 April. It called for equal payments of £7,720 at keel laying, framing, plating, launch, and delivery, with machinery at equivalent levels of completion. It would appear that the HBC did not want its association with the ship advertised, and Job only advised the yard of the HBC involvement on 8 May, after receiving HBC approval to do so.

Hull and engine specifications

According to a letter of 24 April, Job had extensive discussions with the consulting engineer for Reid Newfoundland, as well as D&W Henderson, the company who had built the *Beothic* and other steel sealers, “*and thrashed out thoroughly the details of thickness of plating and spacing of framing.*” The result was a page of minor changes to the hull specification and some amendments to the engine specification, mainly reducing the guaranteed speed from 14 kts to 13³/₄ kts, and a change in equipment for ash handling.

The main change in the hull was a reduction of bow steel thickness from 2” to 1.76”, with shell plating reduced from .96” to .88”, together with other minor reductions in the ice belt. One change that would come back to haunt them—and delay delivery—related to deck sheathing.

Leonard Cunliffe wrote later (probably to the HBC Secretary), returning copies of the specification and plans, that he did not see anything that materially affected the performance of the ship.

Naming the ship

There is a gap of about two weeks in the correspondence files after 8 April, and the only reference to selection of the name comes in a much later letter from Job (Liverpool) on 31 May, which refers to the name “*we have jointly agreed upon*” but questions the spelling. However, they leave the final decision on this topic to “*your chairman*”—presumably HBC Governor Lord Strathcona.

Ownership and management of the Nascopie Steamship Company

Although Job initially conceived of the ownership on a 50/50 basis and suggested that payments to the yard were split equally (£3,860 each), it appears that the HBC wanted to

ensure that they had ultimate control over the ship. Company capital was to be \$220,000 CDN, made up of 220 shares valued at £1,000 each; HBC would own 107 shares and Job 103. They settled on a subscribed capital of \$210,000, which was seen as adequate for construction of the ship and working capital. Each party had the right to subscribe up to \$5,000 each to the balance of paid-up capital. In recognition of its management role, Job had the right to not less than 75 shares.

Each company was to appoint two directors to the board, and Job, as managers, would earn commissions on net profits as follows:

< £6,000	5%
£6-7,000	5 ¹ / ₂ %
£7-8,000	6%
£8-9,000	6 ¹ / ₂ %
£9-10,000	7%
£10,000>	7 ¹ / ₂ %

For 1912, 1913, and 1914, the HBC would take the *Nascopie* on charter at £1,200/month and would pay all coals, port charges, and pilotage for a period commencing in July each year for a duration sufficient to deliver all goods.

The final agreement regarding shareholding and management was dated 2 January 1912.

The Job directors were William G. Job and Robert B. Job. The HBC directors were not given in the agreement, but elsewhere are identified as Thomas Skinner and Leonard Cunliffe.¹⁰

Construction, launch and delivery

A four-page worksheet for construction of the ship, dated 29 February 1912 indicates key events:

Keel Laid	12 June
Framing Commenced	11 July
Framing Complete	28 August
Plated	13 November
Launch	07 December
Trials run	24 January
Sailed	30 January

The General Arrangement that accompanied the work sheets shows that the *Nascopie* was 285' between perpendiculars, 43'9" extreme beam, 22'6", 2,600 tons dwt on a Summer Draft of 21'4³/₄". Cubic capacity was better than originally expected at 177,000ft³ Grain and 158,800ft³ Bale. Interestingly, the work sheets give a total cost of £31,239/6/3, which appeared to include the 5"x3" Oregon pine deck sheathing. Thus, the yard made quite a decent profit on the contract, despite the apparent steep discount from the original price to the accepted bid. Job took a £2,500 cheque for extras with them to North Shields. It is not clear exactly what this covered, but it appeared to be the deck sheathing, Marconi wireless, and other work connected with sealing that could be done at less cost by the shipyard than in St. John's.

The final price for the ship was thus £47,500, made up as follows:

Contract price	£38,600
Premium for exceeding contract speed	£250

Other extras, including partial sealing outfit	£2,450
Naval architect's fee	£500
12 months insurance, steamer, and freight	£3,200
Seal Fishery outfit St. John's	<u>£2,500</u>
Total	£47,500

An undated and unattributed press clipping in the HBC correspondence file announced the launch of the *Nascopie* on Thursday 07 December 1911. The ship was named by Miss Mildred A. Job of Liverpool, and Mr. T.B. Job (“one of our juniors”) was also in attendance for the owners.¹¹ The HBC was only mentioned as ordering the ship in conjunction with Messrs. Job Brothers of Liverpool. It was also noted that the ship had been built under the supervision of Messrs. G. S. Goodwin, Consulting Engineers, of Liverpool, was especially heavily built, and had quarters for nearly 300 sealers. The work sheets included the cost of 250 iron beds.¹²

The work sheets also showed that accommodation was provided for 16 first-class passengers¹³ and 16 officers in the deckhouse, while sealers would be in the shelter deck. The working crew were to be housed, as per tradition, in cramped quarters in the forecabin.

The launch was delayed because of the early decision by Job regarding the extent of deck sheathing in order to reduce the bid price. Deck sheathing is essential for ships working in

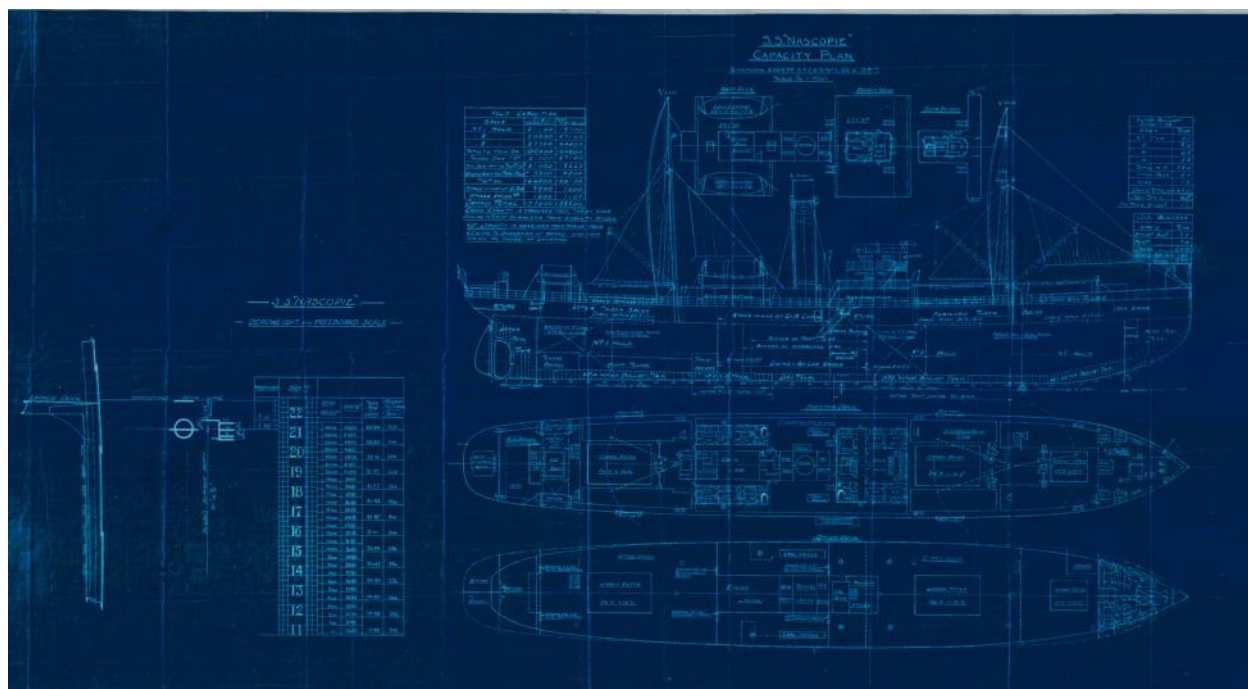


Figure 2: The General Arrangements

arctic waters, although it would seem it was not considered necessary for sealing ships. The question first came up on 30 November, and wood sheathing was quoted by the yard at £650, which Job considered excessive. The HBC countered with a suggestion of Courtecene, a product that was roundly condemned both by the yard and by the consulting engineers, who thought it good for the tween decks of a man-o-war, but not in any exposed

location. The yard also advised that it would cost more than wood sheathing. After several exchanges, £650 for wood sheathing was approved on 4 December.

As noted above, the ship was launched on 7 December, and ran trials on 24 January 1912. The weather was stormy, but the ship achieved 14.1kts at a mean draft of 15'11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", equivalent to 1,270dwt—slightly in excess of half load condition. This earned the yard a £250 premium as per contract.

Sealing and trading

The image displays three pages of construction cost work sheets for the ship *ss Nascopie*. The sheets are organized into columns and rows, detailing various construction tasks and their associated costs. The first page is titled 'COST OF THE SHIP' and includes a table with columns for 'ITEMS', 'QUANTITIES', 'UNIT PRICES', and 'TOTALS'. The second page is titled 'DETAILS OF CARPENTERS CONSTRUCTION' and includes a table with columns for 'ITEMS', 'QUANTITIES', 'UNIT PRICES', and 'TOTALS'. The third page is titled 'DETAILS OF JOINER WORK' and includes a table with columns for 'ITEMS', 'QUANTITIES', 'UNIT PRICES', and 'TOTALS'. The sheets are filled with handwritten entries and organized into columns and rows, detailing various construction tasks and their associated costs.

Figure 3: *ss Nascopie* construction cost work sheets from Tyne and Wear Archives

Trading started as soon as the ship was delivered, and in a letter dated 25 January 1912, Job (Liverpool) advised that they had secured freight of £-/9/3/ton for a cargo of coal from Cardiff to St. John's and hoped to fit in a Sydney-to-St. John's coal voyage as well before sealing.¹⁵ They opined that the revenue from these voyages should pay for the outbound voyage. There was apparently one storm after another during the delivery voyage and the boat rolled abominably, with the chief engineer commenting that the ship would have to be fitted with bilge keels.¹⁶ The last 200 miles into St. John's were through ice, however, and the ship performed very well.

Problems over employment of the *Nascopie* commenced as soon as the HBC Fur Trade Commissioner came into the picture. A Job letter of 12 May 1912 diplomatically points out that the request for the ship to be in Montreal by 15 June was far earlier than originally expected. Also, it noted that the ship broke its propeller blades during the seal fishery, and the new blades would not leave England until the end of May.

Following its first season, Captain Cleveland Smith stated in a report¹⁷ on the *Nascopie's* performance that *"She is not a good sea boat, and a big deck cargo would be unsafe. At present she is the Queen of the Rollers, but I understand she is to have bilge keels put on—this may make her all right; without them she is hardly safe."*

The ship apparently went to Newcastle for repairs at some point during the winter of 1912/13, and a letter from Job dated 13 February 1913 notes that the bilge keels had been added and that the ship was, again, loading coal for St. John's. In a letter of 27 February,

they confirmed a cable noting that the bilge keels had been effective, and the ship made a seven-day transit from The Lizard, despite having to steam through quite a bit of ice.

On 12 March 1913, Job advised the HBC that the seal fishery would commence the following day and that they had insured the ship as follows for 1913:

Hull and machinery, all risks	£39,500
Disbursements, profits, and sealing	£2,500
Freight	£1,200
Premium reducing ¹⁸	£3,500
Total	£46,500

In 1915, Harvey withdrew the *Adventure* from its charter with Revillon in favour of a contract with the Dominion Government to serve the proposed new port at Nelson River. The HBC had hoped to carry their 600-700 tons of cargo at \$60 per ton,¹⁹ but the offer was declined (see p 92 *Arctic Cargo: A History of Marine Transportation in Canada's North* for details on how Revillon solved their "supply chain" conundrum). This apparently placed the HBC in a difficulty; they had counted on using Revillon's warehouse in Montreal to store English goods from the *Pelican* prior to the arrival of the *Nascopie*, and alternatives were apparently expensive.

Representative freight rates for goods loaded at Montreal 1912 season²⁰

Destination	Cdn.Goods	Hardware	Coal & Salt
Labrador	50/-	25/-	
Hudson Bay	60/-	30/-	20/-
Ungava	60/-	30/-	20/-
Charlton	60/-		20/-

There was a considerable jump in rates from 1912 to 1915. Unfortunately, there does not appear to be advice from the HBC regarding any changes in 1913 or 1914.

Representative freight rates for goods loaded at Montreal 1915 season

Other items: Coal for the *Inenew* at Charlton 32/6. Toboggans 14/-. Codfish, per quintal 8/-

Destination	English Goods	Cdn.Goods & Flour	Firewood	Canoes	Tug	Boats	Empty Barrels
Charlton	105/-	105/-					
York Factory	87/-	87/-			£30	£10	8/-
Chesterfield	165/-	165/-		48/-			8/-
Hudson Strait	80/-	80/-	60/-				
Ungava	140/-	140/-				£10	

Comparative performance as a sealer

Performance in sealing was as much to do with the capability of the sealing master as it was the ship. Pure luck and ice conditions also figured in the results, and the *Nascopie* did not have good luck during its sealing career. In 1912, it sheared off two blades from its propeller shortly after leaving St. John's, then took the third blade and part of the fourth shortly afterwards. Captain Barbour, working with John Ledingham, the Chief Engineer, undertook a

risky repair in the ice. This took three days of round-the-clock work. The delay materially affected their returns: Captain Barbour was unable to find many harp seals, which were much more valuable than other types of seal. Then, in 1913, bad ice conditions also affected returns. The *Nascopie*'s sealing career was capped by the disastrous 1915 season, where overall fleet returns were pitiful. The only ship to find a patch of seals was Bowring's *Stephano*, which returned about two thirds of the total catch.

Value of seals landed in St John's, dollars

- Under number of boats, the number returning less than \$10,000 in value that season is given in brackets. Note particularly 1915

Year	Total	Number of Boats	Job Share: Percentage	Beothic	Nascopie	Best in Year
1910	674,296	20 (1)	17	62,314	n/a	90,800
1911	477,781	17 (1)	26	50,543	n/a	50,543
1912	392,204	23 (9)	28 (39)	60,016	35,540	60,016
1913	493,846	19 (3)	14 (26)	0	54,907	69,562
1914	497,980	20 (4)	28 (35)	61,630	38,248	61,630
1915	93,659	13 (11)	8 (10)	4,964	2,151	52,586

- Job share excludes contribution by *Nascopie*, figure in brackets if the *Nascopie* catch is included

In 1913, the *Beothic* was involved in a collision exiting The Narrows en route to the sealing grounds, and did not work that season because of extensive damage. It would appear that it sailed for the Clyde for repairs, as well as work that extended its capacity from 1,400 to 1,620 tons, with corresponding increases in grain and bale capacity.

Operation on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company

Trading appeared to be the responsibility of Job (Liverpool), and only anecdotal information is available from the HBC correspondence files as to cargoes carried. Typically, there would be anxious exchanges between the Secretary, and possibly the Fur Trade Commissioner, with Job around the agreed date for delivery in Montreal. For the first three years, the ship arrived on time in Montreal, and it was only 1915 (see the table below) when there were real redelivery problems and the ship was late.

It isn't known whether the ship spent time each winter in the UK for repairs during this period, but the *Nascopie* always seemed to arrive in St. John's in time for the sealing season, usually with a delivery cargo of coal. Following sealing, Job traded the ship on the spot market.

The table showing ss *Nascopie*'s performance on behalf of HBC in the Eastern Arctic has been derived from logs provided in the correspondence files, but information about cargo and freight rates is very spotty; while some years have extensive material, others are relatively sparse. No data on cargo quantities could be found for 1914, which had only 20 letters in the correspondence file. Master's orders, for most seasons, are also missing, although there is such a letter to Captain Cleveland Smith for 1912. This includes a comment regarding the reason for the call at Chesterfield Inlet and instructions regarding a

new boat for Georges River, as well as collecting the returns. There is no evidence, however, that the ship called there on its return voyage.

In 1912 there were 14 “saloon” passengers who joined the ship in Montreal, some of whom undertook a round trip and disembarked in St. John’s at the end of the voyage.

ss *Nascope* Arctic Voyages 1912-1915

Place	1912		1913		1914		1915	
	Arr	Dep	Arr	Dep	Arr	Dep	Arr	Dep
St John’s		Jun 30		Jun 29				
Montreal ²¹	Jul 03	Jul 24	Jul 03	Jul 17	Jun 25	Jul 06		Aug 02
Cartwright	Aug 01	Aug 06	Jul 23	Aug 04	Jul 13	Jul 30		
Port Burwell	Aug 09	Aug 10	Aug 09	Aug 10			Aug 09	Aug 09
Lake Hbr.	Aug 11	Aug 17					Aug 11	Aug 14
Wakeham Bay							Aug 15	Aug 16
Cape Dorset							Aug 19	Aug 21
Wolstenholme	Aug 19	Aug 22			Aug 13	Aug 16	Aug 21	Aug 23
Churchill	Aug 25	Aug 31	Aug 16	Aug 19	Aug 20	Aug 25	Aug 25	Aug 30
Chesterfield	Sep 03	Sep 05					Aug 31	Sep 02
Nelson Roads ²²	Sep 09	Sep 09						
York Factory	Sep 11	Sep 15			Aug 26	Sep 11	Sep 05	Sep 19
Charlton	Sep 23	Oct 02	Sep 03	Sep 19	Sep 17	Sep 26	Sep 25	Sep 30
Wolstenholme	Oct 06	Oct 06					Oct 04	Oct 04
Lake Harbour							Oct 06	Oct 07
Fort Chimo	Oct 10	Oct 16			Oct 07	Oct 11	Oct 10	Oct 13
Davis Inlet	Oct 19	Oct 20						
Rigolet	Oct 20	Oct 22						
Cartwright	Oct 25	Oct 29						
St. John’s	Oct 31		Oct 08				Oct 18	
English Qtts.	903		949				230	
Canadian Qtts.	1,249.5		1,438				1,738	
Total	2,152.5		2,387				1,968	

The information in the table comes with a number of caveats:

- The log for the 1912 voyage does not include the places that the ship called; they have been reconstructed from a map by Captain Edmund Mack carried in the September 1938 issue of *Beaver*. However, the map and his account do not agree with the log. It would appear that calls at Davis Inlet and Rigolet were only on the homeward leg, not the outward leg. Quantities were derived from page 263 of *Arctic Cargo*. Note that these are indents and not actual quantities carried. Indents for 1913 were 2,508 tons.
- The 1913 outward voyage rendezvoused with the *Pelican* at Cartwright. English cargo included gunpowder and oil, Canadian cargo for Ungava and the Straits delivered to the *Pelican* by the *Nascope*.

- 1914 posts calls and times were gleaned from a handwritten note in the correspondence file. Transshipment of cargo to/from *Pelican* were noted in the Master's orders letter.
- 1915 posts calls and quantities are given in a tabulation by destination. They exclude extensive deck cargo, viz: 1 tug, 1 Dinghy, 44 Canoes, 12 Toboggans, 291 Empty Barrels, 16 quintals of codfish.

The final sale of Job Brothers' share in the Nascope Steamship Company

The first intimation of an interest by the Tsarist Government in the *Nascope* is not from R.B. Job's 1915 diary, but from a brief sentence in a private letter on 27 April 1915 from J.W.R. Job of the Liverpool office to L.F. Cunliffe. In this he notes, "*I was under the impression that the suggested visit by a member of our Firm to you was solely to discuss matters in event of an acceptable offer being made by the Russian Government for Nascope, which from silence of our friends on the other side we now assume is off.*"

The first diary entry regarding the sale of ships to the Russians is on 27 July, and not about the *Nascope*, but that Alick (Harvey) was not keen on a charter arrangement, but favoured selling the three *Ventures* for \$225,000 each. Eventually, on 15 November, there is a diary entry noting that the "*Ventures are practically sold at a net price of \$210,000 each.*" Five days later, the writer is "*reliably informed*" that the *Adventure* and *Bellaventure* closed at \$220,000 each less 5%. Harvey tried to get \$230,000 for the *Bonaventure* but was declined (the ship eventually sold around the end of the year). Harvey's shareholders were "*much dissatisfied*" with the price relative to the *Beothic*, which sold for \$290,000 net.

On 4 September there is a copy of a cable from Job (Liverpool) to Beaver that reads as follows:

St. John's cables have enquiry purchase Nascope £90,000 indicated as possible kindly let us have your views by Monday

In the meantime, trading went on as usual, with no mention of a possible sale in R.B. Job's diary. There is an entry for 29 September noting that Job (St. John's) had negotiated a charter with Newfoundland Shipping at \$13,000/month for a round trip to the Mediterranean, for delivery in St. John's in the second half of October (expected discharge ports were Naples and Alicante).²³

R.B. Job's subsequent diary entries note the following:

08 October Tasker Cook offered £85,000 for the *Nascope* and \$290,000 for the *Beothic*.

09 October Called a meeting of the directors of the Thetis Steamship Company (holding company for the *Beothic*) and agreed to accept the price offered.

12 October Liverpool advised that Beaver (HBC) unlikely to sell *Nascope*.

13 October Beaver wires that they had requested a Liverpool partner to proceed to London to consult with them regarding the *Nascope* sale. R.B. Job's comment: *I thought someone would have gone there before*

18 October After encountering heavy ice in the straits, *Nascope* arrived at St. John's, Captain Mack *thinks he may have started a few rivets*.

19 October Chartered the *Nascope* to Harvey for coal at \$1.60/ton.

25 October *Nascope* arrived from Sydney, master reported a leak in No. 3 hold. R.B. Job opines that this may need dry docking.²⁴

On 5 November, a letter (rather than a diary entry) from the HBC to Job (Liverpool) outlines the sale:

We confirm the verbal arrangement made by you this morning on behalf of yourselves and your friends in Newfoundland, as follows:

We agree to purchase, and you agree to sell at par the 108 shares held by yourselves and/or your friends, having a total value of \$108,000.

We agree to pay to you in addition such a sum by way of a bonus as will make a total of £42,218,37d, that is to say the equivalent of 108/220ths of the total sum of £86,000, which was the price at which you desired us to sell the steamer to the Agents of the Russian Government.

The balance of the letter relates to the appropriate share in profits from the Naples voyage, as well as deductions for advances made on the shares. The balance was to be paid, at current exchange rates, to “*your friends in Newfoundland.*”

06 November Notes acceptance of *Beothic* (by Russian representatives) and news from Liverpool as to arrangements for sale of shares in the Nascopie Steamship Company. R.B. Job notes: “*All together a red letter day in the history of the firm.*”

24 November Settlement of shares for *Nascope* not very satisfactory, and R.B. Job fears that Liverpool’s letter of 10 November to Beaver is rather committal.

27 December “*Received notice today from bank of receipt of \$118,187.00 as payment on account Nascope.*” Out of this sum Job paid Royal Stores (a Job subsidiary company) and the Hon. M.G. Winter for their shares in the ship.

With the completion of this transaction, ownership of ss *Nascope* finally transferred to the Hudson’s Bay Company.

Annex 1

Sources referenced regarding the origin of ss *Nascope*:

1. Doug Grey, RMS Nascope: Ship of the North. 1997

On page 24, Grey refers to Lord Strathcona’s announcement at the 1911 Annual Court of Proprietors: “*To put the Company’s transport on a proper footing, and to avoid the necessity of chartering extra tonnage. A new type of vessel is being built. This will assure suitable tonnage to the company for some years to come.*” There is no mention of Job, who only appear on page 34 in the section on Ownership and Chartering: “*To build the ship, HBC entered into an agreement with Job Brothers of St. John’s and Liverpool, England.*”

The implication is that the HBC built the ship, and perhaps saw Job as a partner who could provide alternate season employment. This supposition is strengthened by Grey noting that the HBC held 117 shares to Job’s 107²⁶ shares in the Nascope Steamship Company, which was established as the ownership vehicle, and incorporated in St. John’s Newfoundland.

2. Peter C. Newman, Company of Adventurers, Vol III: The Nascope Chronicles. Chapter 11: “Merchant Princes.” 1991.

Newman states unequivocally that on 10 July 1911, Lord Strathcona commissioned construction of a 2,500-ton supply vessel from Swan Hunter of Newcastle on Tyne. Newman’s history of the ship does not even mention Job.

3. C.P. Wilson, “*Nascopie: The Story of a Ship.*” *The Beaver*²⁷ 1947.

This was, essentially, an obituary for the ship. Like other authors, Wilson adhered to the notion that it had been built by the HBC, and his article begins by quoting at length from the 10 July 1911 minutes. In the article’s second paragraph he states that Job Brothers of Newfoundland were to own a minority interest, the capital of the company was to be \$220,000,²⁸ and that the name of the steamer was to be *Nascopie*.

4. William Barr, “SS *Nascopie*: Newfoundland Sealing Steamer,” *The Newfoundland Quarterly*. 1978.

Barr commences his article by quoting the full paragraph from the 10 July 1911 Annual General Court of Proprietors. However, the following statement offers the strong implication that the HBC were responsible for the construction of the ship: “*Owner of the minority interest in the new ship was the St. John’s sealing and trading company, Job Brothers. They were particularly interested in having a strongly built steamer, which could participate in the annual seal hunt off the Newfoundland coast.*”

This short paper is primarily concerned with the *Nascopie*’s performance in the seal hunts for 1912, 13, 14 and 15. It finishes with extensive quotations from Hon. R.B. Job’s diary for 1915 covering the sale of the company interests in the *Nascopie* Steamship Company to the HBC, as well as sale of the St. John’s steel sealing fleet to Russian interests.

5. Henry Nixon, “SS/RMS *Nascopie* 1912-1947: Biography of a ship,” *Argonauta*. 1987.

This was a short report of work in progress, with a request for assistance from members of the CNRS. It does not appear that the proposed paper, or book, was ever completed. Nixon states that the *Nascopie* Steamship Company was formed by Job Brothers of St. John’s (49%), and the Hudson’s Bay Company (51%). This is the closest any of the sources comes to suggesting the ship was built by Job, but is still not a definitive statement. He does point out that the ship only became entitled to the prefix RMS in 1933, when the complement began to include a postmaster.

6. Wikipedia

The Wikipedia entry for the ship states that the Hudson’s Bay Company owned RMS *Nascopie*, which is technically correct—from 1916 onwards. Although the article does not indicate for whom the ship was built, it does note that the ship was involved in sealing for Job Brothers. A footnote incorrectly states that the ship was designed and built by Swan Hunter.

7. Christopher Wright, *Arctic Cargo: A History of Marine Transportation in Canada’s North*. 2016.

Drawing on four of the resources noted above, but particularly the unequivocal statement in *Merchant Princes* by Peter Newman, together with the HBC Archival record for the ship,²⁹ Wright states on page 260 that the HBC built the ship. As this brief paper, the result of further research, demonstrates, this is now known to be inaccurate.

Annex 2

Primary Resources

- HBC Correspondence files for 1911-1915 in Microfilm reels 846 and 847. Although these are comprehensive, there are some gaps in the files that have been noted.
- Hon. R.B. Job diary for 1915, referenced in Newfoundland and Labrador Archives at The Rooms, St. John’s NL.

- Files as noted relating to Job Brothers and the Nascopie Steamship Company from the Maritime History Archive of Memorial University St. John's NL
- Chafe Sealing Statistics 1923

End Notes

1. Job were primarily a St John's, Newfoundland-based trading company. The principal partners in the company, including W.G. Job, were based in St. John's.
2. Prior to the construction of the *Beothic*, Job had canvassed yards in Norway and elsewhere regarding a new steel sealer.
3. See page 259 *Arctic Cargo: A History of Marine Transportation in Canada's North* for details.
4. From different sources, but mainly "Ships and Seafarers of Atlantic Canada." Some errors have been corrected. Some of the figures given for depth are more than likely the ship's draft, and have been shown as such.
5. These are the sealing crews given by Chafe for 1913; however, it is unlikely they were all the same.
6. From Chafe.
7. This would have been Leonard Cunliffe, who was a director of the HBC and a crucial business advisor to the company. He was an influential financier in London and a major investor in Harrods department store.
8. Charlton Island was the HBC primary distribution point for James Bay trading posts. James Bay and the area around Charlton Island are relatively shallow.
9. The 155,000ft³ was for bale and case goods. Grain cubic was 166,000ft³.
10. Leonard Cunliffe essentially saved the HBC from a slow death under Lord Strathcona's autocratic rule as Governor. His name appears frequently in correspondence regarding the ship. Cunliffe had been elected to the board in 1907 and was obviously a respected advisor to Ingram as Board Secretary. He and Skinner visited Canada in October 1912, but did not call on Job in St. John's.
11. Job had tried to get the HBC to attend, but no one seemed to be available.
12. Hoskins or equivalent portable iron berths in 2 tiers, steel laths, bottom frames fitted up complete in shelter tween deck, sufficient to berth 250 men.
13. The General Arrangement is not clear on exactly where these staterooms were located, although the work sheets state they were in the deckhouse.
14. Probably a type of linoleum.
15. Coal from Sydney to St. John's remained a constant trading option as long as Job had the management of the ship.
16. An undated copy of the Hull Specification has a hand-written note that bilge keels were to be fitted.
17. There were three reports on the ship, from Capt. Smith, Capt Freakley (supercargo), and Mr. A.N. Hall Fur Trade Commissioner, who traveled from Montreal to York Factory. The latter's report was apparently full of petty quibbles, and there is a highly aggrieved note from Capt. Smith in the *Nascopie* file.
18. Unsure what this term means.
19. As the HBC rate of 105/- was equivalent to about \$25, of which Revillon would have been well aware, \$60/ton represented a considerable premium.
20. The rates can be found on page 263 of *Arctic Cargo*. They are also given in a letter 08 May 1912 from HBC to the Fur Trade Commissioner.

21. Vessel bunkering 4-8 July. Commenced loading 11 July, and on 22 July ss *Saguenay* collided heavily with the ship.
 22. The call at Nelson Roads was to take advantage of the doctor on ss *Minto* for a sick 4th Engineer, and a Mr. Broughton from Lake Harbour who had been badly frostbitten.
 23. With the sale of the Nascopie Steamship Company, Job negotiated a payment of \$6,000 from Newfoundland Shipping for redelivery at Naples.
 24. This does not seem to have been needed, as the ship finished discharge on 27 October and went on hire to Newfoundland Shipping the following day. It loaded 36,000 quintals of dried codfish valued at \$300,000—at that time, the largest codfish cargo loaded at St. John's.
 25. It is not clear when the shareholding changed from 103/107 to 108/112.
 26. This was not the original shareholding by the two companies and does not seem to be supported by other references.
 27. *The Beaver* was the HBC house magazine and started publication in 1920. There were 23 articles of 4 pages' length or greater published between 1920 and 1989 about the *Nascope*, mainly about the ship in wartime.
 28. Initial capital was \$210,000. It was raised later to \$220,000.
 29. In 1911, the Hudson's Bay Company and Job Brothers of St John's formed the Nascopie Steamship Company Ltd.
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Admirals' Medal Recipients, 2018-21

Richard Gimblett

Established in 1985 in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the Naval Service of Canada, the Admirals' Medal is bestowed upon individuals to recognize their contributions to the advancement of maritime affairs in Canada. Named for Vice-Admiral Rollo Mainguy and Rear-Admirals George Stephens and Victor Brodeur, the silver medal was established by their respective sons who also rose to flag rank: Vice-Admirals Daniel Mainguy, Robert Stephens, and Nigel Brodeur.

Responsibility for the Admirals' Medal Foundation was transferred from the RCN to the Naval Association of Canada (NAC) in 2021. NAC Naval Affairs has stood up a committee of retired Flag/Senior officers to carry out the review and selection process. Fuller information—including a full listing of past recipients of the Medal (many of whom will be familiar to members of the Society), the Selection Criteria, and a Nomination Form—can be accessed at: <https://www.navalassoc.ca/the-admirals-medal/>. Nominations should be submitted to the Secretary of the Medal Selection Committee, Dr Richard Gimblett, at: richard.gimblett@me.com

It having been impracticable to hold formal presentations of the Medal for the past couple of years, NAC is pleased to report that small local events have been held in recent months to honour the following recipients:

2018: Mr Brian T. Hill is recognized for his lifetime achievement in snow, ice, and iceberg research, primarily with the Institute for Ocean Technology at the National Research Council, St John's NL (1984-2009). As the Supervisor of the Ice Tank physical model test facility, Brian was responsible for over one thousand physical modelling experiments of ships, submersibles, and offshore structures in ice. Beyond his 25-year NRC job description, and of his own initiative—and in his own evening and weekend time and in his years since retirement—Brian has established a set of four significant 200-year databases of historical ice conditions in the North Atlantic covering, respectively, the sea ice extent off the east coast of Newfoundland; the sea ice extent in the Gulf of St Lawrence and on the Scotian Shelf; iceberg populations on the Grand Banks; and ship collisions with icebergs throughout the region. Well over 170,000 ice and iceberg reports have been gathered in the four databases. These databases have proven to be invaluable in the safe industrial development of the east coast offshore oil fields, and more lately with the realization that the extent of sea ice may be a proxy for ongoing climate change. They can be accessed at: <https://newicedata.com>.



2018 recipient — Mr Brian Hill (centre), presented by Lieutenant-Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador the Honourable Judy Foot (right) and President Naval Association Newfoundland Branch Mr Don Peckham, St John's NL, 23 August 2022.

2019: Dr Barry M. Gough, FHRS, is Professor Emeritus of History at Wilfrid Laurier University and Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, with additional affiliations including Archives By-Fellow Churchill College Cambridge UK, Past President of the Canadian Nautical Research Society and of the British Columbia Historical Federation, and founding member of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States. He is recognized for his lifetime achievement as a global maritime and naval historian, beginning with a pioneering study, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914* (1971), through some 30 major volumes and numerous articles, culminating with the magisterial *Pax Britannica: Ruling the Waves and Keeping the Peace Before Armageddon* (2014) and *Churchill and Fisher: Titans at the Admiralty* (2017)—altogether a body of work that has earned him international acclaim as a Canadian scholar of the highest order.



2019 recipient — Dr Barry Gough (left), presented by Admiral John Anderson RCN (ret'd) in Victoria BC, 27 May 2022.

2020: Captain Rolfe A. Monteith, CVSM, CD, RCN (ret'd) served in the RCN (1940-70) as an Engineer Officer with Marine and Air specializations, including aboard the aircraft carrier HMCS *Magnificent* and as Project Director for the Canadian Hydrofoil Project, emigrating to the United Kingdom upon retirement from the Navy for a second career in the British marine industry. He is awarded the Admirals' Medal for his many activities on behalf of Canadian naval veterans, in particular the formation of the Canadian Naval Air Group (CNAG) and Canadian Naval Technical History Association (CNTHA), and his continuing promotion of the Canadian Veterans' Association (UK) and the Arctic Convoys to Russia Association.



2020 recipient — Captain Rolfe Monteith, presented at HMS Drake (Plymouth UK), 12 June 2022.

2021: Lieutenant Peter Ward, CD RCN(R) (ret'd) is an acclaimed retired journalist, military editor, war correspondent, broadcaster, author, and wine columnist who served as a Public Information Officer with the Naval Reserve Division HMCS York (1962-1978). Recipient of the Peacekeeping Medal for deployments to Cyprus and the Vietnam Decoration for seeing action as an embedded journalist and side gunner with a US Army helicopter unit, his poignant photography and objective reporting from the front lines were published in major newspapers worldwide. As one of the original five founding members of HAIDA Inc, he is being recognized *inter alia* for his critical role in the acquisition and the preservation of HMCS *Haida*, a famous Second World War Tribal-class destroyer, now a National Historical Site and the ceremonial flagship for the Royal Canadian Navy, berthed in Hamilton, Ontario.



2021 recipient — Mr Peter Ward (right), presented by Rear-Admiral Casper Donovan, in Ottawa, 28 April 2022.

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Former HMCS *Fraser* rather than Ex-*Fraser*
Foreign ships and submarines:
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 HMS *Victory*
 HMAS *Canberra* 3

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